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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DOHA 000807

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/17/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [QA](#) [AL](#) [AU](#)  
SUBJECT: MFA, ARAB DEMOCRACY FOUNDATION DIFFER ON  
MAURITANIA "INITIATIVE"

REF: A. STATE 119713  
[1](#)B. DOHA 799

Classified By: Ambassador Joseph E. LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

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(C) KEY POINTS  
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-- When Ambassador discussed Mauritania with the MFA and the Arab Democracy Foundation, he got rather different, competing responses about Qatar's diplomacy in Mauritania.

-- Arab Democracy Foundation trustee Khalid Al-Attayah, who was recently named as a MFA Minister of State, indicated that he would like the Foundation's effort to help fashion a settlement in Mauritania to continue. He thought a political settlement was possible in which deposed President Abdullahi would return to office, but resign immediately, even after half an hour, in favor of new elections.

-- When Ambassador delivered ref(a) points to Ahmed al-Mahmoud, Qatar's other MFA Minister of State, and de facto Foreign Minister, al-Mahmoud denied that any Qatar diplomatic initiative on Mauritania was underway. He said he had had to tell the French that, too, and he expressed his strong irritation with the Arab Democracy Foundation.

-- With both officials, Ambassador urged Qatar to closely coordinate any diplomatic effort with the AU, and, with al-Mahmoud, Ambassador urged that Qatar deny moral and financial support to Mauritania's military.

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(C) COMMENTS  
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-- As stated in ref(b), Qatar's MFA is consumed with its Darfur initiative. It is highly unlikely that the MFA will take any but the most superficial diplomatic action on Mauritania.

-- The Arab Democracy Foundation is another story, however. It is possible that the ADF will continue its own brand of diplomacy with Mauritania. If it does, we can expect that "diplomacy" to be limited, since the ADF ultimately reports to Shaykha Mouza, who already has indicated that the ADF's reconciliation efforts in Mauritania will probably shift to the MFA.

End Key Points and Comments.

¶1. (C) At a November 10 meeting with Ambassador, Minister of State for International Cooperation and Conferences Khalid Al-Attiyah expressed his opposition to the current shift of Qatar's efforts in Mauritania away from the Arab Democracy Foundation, part of the Qatar Foundation headed by Shaykha Mouza, in favor of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see ref(b)).

¶2. (C) He said the resources of the MFA were being taxed due to Qatar's efforts in Darfur, and that the Mauritania portfolio would "be lost" if transferred there (Note: Al-Attiyah's new role as a Minister of State actually makes him a part of the MFA, though he is still also closely associated with Shaykha Mouza's Qatar Foundation. End Note).

¶3. (C) Al-Attiyah praised the diplomatic efforts of the ADF, of which he is a trustee. He noted that the group had studied the crisis in depth, and that the former Mauritanian leader Ould Muhammad Vall, who led a 2005 coup but shepherded his country to democracy in 2007, was also an ADF trustee.

¶4. (C) Al-Attiyah stated that he was hopeful that the ADF could help reach a settlement whereby deposed President Sidi Muhammad Sheikh Abdallahi would return to office, "if only for a half hour," so that he could resign in favor of immediate elections.

¶5. (C) Shaykha Mouza bint Nasser Al-Missned, wife of the Amir and President of the ADF, told Ambassador at a November 9 meeting that the efforts of the ADF had been "purely humanitarian" and that she had suggested that the MFA add

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diplomatic efforts to the process. Al-Attiyah believed that the ADF had made diplomatic progress, and considered the elevation of the MFA role a mistake. He said that he will intervene directly with Shaykha Mouza to prevent it.

LeBaron